

number. The approximate area and numbers are as follows: Anko / Ango Ching range and Shiroy (300 sq. km) of Ukhrul district in the north-east. This population has contiguity with forests in Myanmar and about 40-80 Gaurs could still be found. Bunning Wildlife Sanctuary (115 sq. km) and Jiri-Makru forests (198 sq. km) of Tamenglong district in the north-west have a small population of less than 30 animals. In Chandel district, a few are seen in the Yangoupokpi-Lokchao Wildlife Sanctuary (184.80 sq. km), but less than 30 animals are found in the forests (>50 sq. km) towards south, which also move to the Myanmar forests. In Tolbung Reserved Forest (>100 sq. km) and Kailam Wildlife Sanctuary (187 sq. km) of Churachandpur district, only stray animals or groups survive.

From the above account, it seems that the total number of Gaur in Manipur is only 120-160. The long-term survival of Gaurs in Manipur is bleak as the existing numbers are not only very small, but are also severely fragmented with no possibility of contiguity. The protected areas, where a few gaurs still survive, are inadequately protected.

Habitat destruction and poaching continue to be major threats. The main cause of decline is unreported poaching. Protection measures in the sanctuaries should be strengthened. Anko/ Ango Ching range and Shiroy should be declared wildlife sanctuaries. Conservation education among villagers living along the fringe areas of PAs with the help of NGOs is also strongly recommended.

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6. SIGNIFICANT NEW LOW ELEVATION RECORD FOR GORAL *NEMORHAEDUS GORAL* (HARDWICKE)¹

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The Goral (genus *Nemorhaedus*) is represented in the Indian subcontinent by three forms, which are treated as different subspecies as well as species – *goral*, *baileyi* and *caudatus* (Choudhury 2003; Corbet and Hill 1992; Ellerman and Morrison-Scott 1951; Wilson and Reeder 1993), however, there was no proper description of upgrading these as distinct species except popular descriptions, such as Groves and Grubb (1985). There is also significant colour difference within a species or even subspecies. In Himalayan goral *N. goral*, which is grey-brown, although the tendency is not to recognize *hodgsoni* as a subspecies, latter form is rufous-brown and distinct in the field. The Chinese goral *N. caudatus* in the Himalaya and Mishmi Hills is dark grey, while form *evansi* in Mizoram is brown.

The goral occurs in the hills and mountains, preferring cliffs and rocky hill sides from elevations ranging from 900 to 4,250 m (Prater 1980), from 820 m up in Pakistan (Corbet and

Hill 1992). It is only at higher latitudes such as Ussuri area of eastern Russia that it occurs at the sea level (Schaller 1977). In the lower latitude, including the Indian subcontinent, the known lower altitudinal limit was 820 m. The altitudinal movement in the Himalaya is mainly noticed in winter due to heavy snowfall in the higher elevations. I here report an interesting observation where goral was recorded at a very low elevation at latitudes it was never recorded earlier.

On November 28, 2004, three boatmen while pulling a boat upstream had noticed two 'wild goats' – goral or serow – on a cliff on the right bank of the Manas river in Royal Manas National Park, Bhutan (26° 49' N, 90° 56' E) (Fig. 1). The boat was pulled to Panbang, a sub-divisional headquarter in Bhutan for me where I was camping. The next day, while boating downstream, the boatmen showed me the spot, but the 'wild goats' were not there. Suddenly one of the boatmen



Fig. 1: Map of Bhutan

shouted, and I could see one goral a few metres from the previous day's site. It was on the cliff that was covered by

sparse vegetation. It then slowly moved behind scrub. The elevation where the Goral was seen was 110 m above the mean sea level. Sighting record of Goral at such an elevation was never reported and I even did not expect. I had observed Serow at 100 m in the Himalayan foothills only in winter, and in south of the Brahmaputra, sporadically round the year, but the sighting of Goral was interesting. From the range, it seems to be a Himalayan Goral *N. goral*, but it was rufous-brown indicating that it was of form *hodgsoni* Pocock.

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7. DISCOVERY OF LEAF DEER *MUNTIACUS PUTAOENSIS* RABINOWITZ *ET AL.* IN NAGALAND WITH A NEW NORTHERLY RECORD FROM ARUNACHAL PRADESH¹

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Muntjacs Muntiacus sp. are common and widely spread across India as well as elsewhere in Asia; however, it seems to be an interesting group, with a number of recent discoveries of new species from southeast Asia (Schaller and Vrba 1996; Rabinowitz *et al.* 1999). One such new species was described from northern Myanmar in 1999 and was named *Muntiacus putaoensis* (Rabinowitz *et al.* 1999). This is a small deer and has been named as 'Leaf Deer' because local hunters called it so in their dialect. Their area of occurrence was in extreme northern Myanmar, around Putao. This discovery indicated the Leaf Deer's possible presence

in India, especially in eastern Arunachal Pradesh. In north-east India, the Indian Muntjac *M. muntjak* is the most abundant of all deer species occupying a wide variety of habitats and altitudinal ranges.

In 1993-1994, while surveying eastern areas of Arunachal Pradesh, in Lohit and Changlang districts, I came across reports of a small deer resembling a muntjac from the Lohit and Changlang districts, both from areas bordering Myanmar. At that time *Muntiacus putaoensis* was not described, and since there was no good collection of muntjac species in Indian museums, comparison was difficult. Though